



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

### **MODULAR AIRBORNE FIREFIGHTING SYSTEM (MAFFS) Albuquerque Airtanker Base 2006 Fire Season**

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#### **MAFFS UNITS RETURN TO NORTH CAROLINA**

**Albuquerque, NM...**Two military C-130s equipped with the Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS) that have been in Albuquerque, New Mexico for initial attack since late evening on March 16<sup>th</sup> will be re-positioned in Charlotte, North Carolina on Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. Even though fire danger is very high to extreme in some areas of the Southwest, Texas, Oklahoma and Colorado, no significant fire activity has occurred.

“The MAFFS mission, providing additional airborne firefighting capability to USDA Forest Service, is a cooperative effort between military, local, state, federal and tribal agencies. All of our efforts are directed to the protection and safeguarding of people and property wherever we fly. Our Air National Guard aircrews and maintenance personnel are ready to deploy anywhere in the United States throughout the annual fire season. We take our job seriously and know that our best efforts mean people on the ground will still have homes, businesses and lives to return to after a wildfire season,” states Mission Commander Jeff Perryman, 145<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, North Carolina Air National Guard.

The two C-130 aircraft are from the 145<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing of the North Carolina Air National Guard from Charlotte, North Carolina. They have been stationed at the Albuquerque Tanker Base, operated by the Cibola National Forest, located at Kirkland Air Force Base. The pilots and aircrews worked firefighting missions in the west last summer, and served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and other areas on international assignments in support of Iraq war efforts.

Fire-preparedness and the public’s cooperation in fire danger awareness and prevention of human-caused wildfire is an excellent example of interagency cooperation and public education,” says Forest Service MAFFS Liaison Officer Earle Franks.

The MAFFS units are activated in coordination with the United States Northern Command through an agreement with the Department of Defense. The aircraft are used to augment the civilian air tanker fleet currently committed to initial attack assignments. There are also two additional Air Guard and one Air Force Reserve unit with the same mission and capability. - 30 -